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ABSTRACT

The evolution of a British communicative language teaching project at the University of Leicester is chronicled. The project brought together local education agencies, examination boards, advisors, teachers, and researchers to develop three levels of graded instructional objectives across the ability range in grades 7-9 and a standardized test, all in French as a second language. Program features include: an integrated approach to second language teaching; novel assessment techniques; promotion of communicative activities in the language classroom at all ability levels; encouragement of French usage by teachers for both teaching and assessment; a central role for writing instruction and assessment; and creation of a forum for teachers' continuous reflective discussion on teaching and assessment issues. The integrated language approach of the project is contrasted with the discrete-skills approach of Britain's current national assessment criteria and standardized testing. Positive aspects of the national curriculum and the need for extensive inservice teacher education are also highlighted. (Author/MSE)

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